Central assistance to drought hit States

564. DR. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether high level task force on drought has considered demands of drought hit States for additional Central assistance;

(b) whether Centre has convened a meeting to prepare contingency plans to deal with any drought like situation in the current fiscal year;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh Government and other drought hit States have fully utilised the amount, so far, provided to them to meet drought;

(d) whether the Supreme Court directed Centre to double States quota of foodgrains and allocation of funds under PM's Sampoorna Gramin Rojgar Yojana on priority basis; and

(e) if so, the schemes that have been worked out in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV):(a) The Task Force on Drought Management, in its meeting held on 30.6.2003, approved further allocation of foodgrains for relief employment to some of the drought affected States.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The drought affected States are yet to report to this Department full utilisation of the funds released to them.

(d) and (e) State Governments are party to the case in which the Hon'ble Supreme Court have passed the relevant orders. It is for the State Governments concerned to implement the said order. On its part, the Central Government has drawn attention of the drought affected States to the said directions of the Hon'ble Court. So far, no State Government has sought any assistance for the purpose.

Implementing Agriculture Policy

565. DR. M.N. DAS:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have called greater efforts in implementing Indian Agriculture Policy;

(b) if so, whether due to the starvation deaths at a time when there was overflowing granaries of foodgrains in the country, Government have decided to examine option of drastically changing policy of stocking foodgrains;

(c) whether the main aim and objective of the agricultural research and development was how to prepare a road map of the policy strategies and to meet resources available to implement the policy; and

(d) if so, what are the changes that are being made to make Agriculture Policy suitable to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE(SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Yes, Sir. The major objectives of the National Agriculture Policy are being addressed through various scheme/plans subsumed under macro-management mode to supplement the efforts of the State Governments for increasing production and productivity of agricultural & horticultural crops.

(b) After consideration of the recommendations of the High Level Committee on Long-term Grain Policy, Government has decided to continue the present open-ended procurement policy without any ceiling on procurement. The buffer stocking norms for each five year plan are reviewed depending on the requirements.

(c) The main aim and objective of research and development is to evolve suitable varieties, which can give higher yield and enhance production of different crops.

(d) The present National Agriculture Policy is comprehensive enough to address various dimensions of the agriculture sector.

Flood and drought in States

566. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the States which are affected by recent flood and drought in this year;